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SSFUL C. E. PRAYER-MEETINGS

JAMES DEFOREST MURCH

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Successful C. E. Prayer-meetings

BY
JAMES DeFOREST MURCH

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Successful Christian Endeavor Prayer-meetings

I.

A SUCCESSFUL POLICY.

EVERY Christian Endeavor society is confronted with the constantly recurring prayer-meeting problem.

"Why don't the young folks attend?"

"How can we secure interest in our meetings?"

"How can we make our programs more attractive?"

"How can we get better results?"

"Why won't they take part?"

The loyal Endeavorer lives in a veritable nightmare of questions and question-marks like these.

The fact is, you can not expect wide-awake Tom Jones, star athlete on the school team, despite the fact he is a church-member, to support a worn-out prayer-meeting like the average. There is too much "same-ole" for him. "Same-ole" music! "Same-ole" crowd! "Same-ole" clippings! "Same-ole" frigid air!

And why expect Sally Brown to grow enthusiastic when every Sunday evening she knows ex-

actly what to expect? A leader, late, rushing madly around the room to find a copy of the *Christian Endeavor World* and get the lesson topic he has never seen before.

First, an "opening song," which somebody will "please" suggest, is followed by another song and another song—always three songs.

Then the Scripture lesson—always the Scripture lesson after the three songs. "Same-ole" order.

Then a prayer by the minister—always by the minister, if he happens to be present. He is about the only one in the prayer-meeting who knows how to pray.

Then a talk by the leader that runs: "We have a very interesting topic this evening, 'The Idlers in the Market-place.' In fact, I think this is one of the most interesting topics we have had for a long time. I am sure everybody can take part. Who will be the first?"

Mrs. Day-before-yesterday is the first on the floor. She always comes first with the "same-ole" testimony she has been giving for "nigh on to forty year."

Then comes a lull. Everybody fidgets. The silence is oppressive.

The leader breaks the ice with: "I have handed out some clippings."

Bill Dumbly reads the wrong side of a clipping —or begins to read it—when he finds it to be the advertisement of a remedy for sleeping sickness. Strangely enough, he doesn't see the appropriateness of the ad and apologizes.

When the clippings are all read, the minister makes the closing remarks and (time-worn custom!) all join in repeating the Mizpah benediction.

Is this an exaggeration? If so, how much of an exaggeration?

Is it any wonder the prayer-meeting crowds are small!

It is possible, however, for every Christian Endeavor society to have successful prayer-meetings every Sunday evening.

Seven things must be borne in mind—a policy with seven P's:

1. Purpose.—This, in every prayer-meeting, is a prime essential. If the meeting does not accomplish something definite—something you can put your finger on—it is a waste of time and janitor service. I heard a preacher say that his prayer-meeting could not be measured by any such rule. "We meet," he said, "for a quiet hour together. We can not tell whose soul will be touched, what heart tendered. Some good that is done will not be revealed until years have passed." This all may be true, but as a method of conducting the meeting it will fail to do the largest good. The effectiveness of such a hit-or-miss program would be doubled if it had a definite purpose. If there is need of civic reform, have a prayer-meeting for the *definite* purpose of enlisting God's guidance. Is some great enterprise confronting the church? *Concentrate* attention upon it and *importune* God about it.

2. Preparation.—When no preparation has been made by the leader or by the people who attend, it is folly to expect a successful prayer-meeting. The leader is not wholly to blame for a poor meeting. On the other hand, the leader has no right to lay the blame wholly upon the audience.

Success comes only through preparation, whether it be in the commercial world or in the religious world.

Given a prepared leader and a prepared audience, a successful prayer-meeting is practically assured.

3. Pep.—Do not imagine that this destroys the spiritual tone of a prayer-meeting. "Pep" is just another way of saying "Action." The meeting should *move* from the opening song to the closing prayer. The music should be led by some one who knows how to keep time and who, under no circumstances, would let a song drag. The pianist should be resourceful and in sympathy with the song leader.

The participation should be regular, the talks short and to the point. Long-winded "speeches," "lectures" or "addresses" will kill a prayer-meeting or put it to sleep. Throughout the hour there should be every sign of life and animation.

When the meeting appears to be lagging, either work up the interest at once or close it. Some of the best prayer-meetings we have ever attended have been only fifteen or twenty minutes in length, but there was something doing every minute. Length is by no means a standard of measurement for a successful meeting.

4. Participation.—It is only after you have had some part in a prayer-meeting that you really enjoy it or have been helped. Every one who attends should be given some part. Indeed, if everybody is interested in the welfare of the meeting, all will take part. Some are inclined to follow the line of least resistance; others are too timid to participate. In either case the prayer-meeting committee must plan to make participation unanimous.

5. Prayer.—I have attended prayer (?) meetings where not a single prayer was uttered. If any one requisite for a successful prayer-meeting could be said to be the most essential, it would be prayer. Every effort should be made to encourage prayer and the prayerful spirit. One of the chief purposes of the Endeavor prayer-meeting is to train young people to pray.

6. Productiveness.—Many times there are ideas brought out in the prayer-meeting that never get any farther than the walls of the society room because nobody notes them down. The society should plan to use the ideas suggested in the meetings the week following, or as soon as practical. Definite results should be obtained from these seasons of reasoning and praying together.

Definite results should also be obtained in the lives of the Endeavorers. They should be manifest in the Christian life and experience. They should show up in original thought on many subjects and develop a capacity for leadership. When such definite results are not apparent, it is time to investigate and lay plans for improvement.

7. Progress.—Dr. Francis E. Clark, founder of the Christian Endeavor movement and a prayer-meeting expert, says: "The besetting sin of a prayer-meeting is monotony. Because of this many a church prayer-meeting is dwindling in attendance and losing its hold on those who conscientiously attend. When the minister or the leader opens the meeting in exactly the same way fifty-two times a year, gives out three hymns, reads a passage of Scripture of about the same length, cuts his remarks off with the same intellectual chopper, opens the meeting to the same brethren to offer the same prayers or make the same kind of remarks, and closes with the same song and benediction, we need not greatly wonder if there are plenty of empty seats, and those for the most part in the front of the chapel."

"Something different always" and "Something better to-night than a week ago" are two splendid mottoes that will encourage a progressive policy and program for the prayer-meeting committee.

II.

SUCCESSFUL SUPERVISION.

PREPAREDNESS is essential to success. Allocation of definite responsibility is the corner-stone of the foundation upon which preparedness is built.

The prayer-meeting committee should be definitely responsible for every one of the fifty-two Christian Endeavor prayer-meetings in the year. Its supervision should be recognized by every member of the society from the president down to the lowliest associate member.

The committee is, of course, appointed by the president, who names its chairman. It usually consists of three dependable, ingenious and studious members. Occasionally the chorister, the minister or the president may add his wisdom to its counsels.

At the first meeting there should be

1. A circle of prayer.
2. Appointment of a secretary.
3. Presentation of topics.
4. Choice of leaders.
5. Provision for notification and publicity.
6. Provision for reference materials.

Let us analyze the wisdom of such procedure. (1) Ask for divine leadership. (2) The secretary

will keep a note-book and a scrap-book: the first for an accurate record of the decisions of the committee; the latter for fresh data on prayer-meeting methods clipped from current periodicals and noted in conventions and conferences. (3) Familiarity with the subjects under discussion at the various meetings is essential to a wise choice of leaders. (4) Leaders should be appointed from three to six months in advance. (5) See that every leader knows of his appointment and that the society is aware of it too. (6) Tools are essential to the successful completion of any task.

After this preparatory meeting the prayer-meeting committee is ready to undertake its duties in earnest.

The preparation of leaders is a real task and should be assumed in earnest by the prayer-meeting committee. Theirs is not only a matter of setting people's names opposite the topics. Getting their consent and sewing them up to their task is far more important and often difficult.

The timid and the stubborn will be found largely to outnumber the willing. The committee must deal with all sorts, keep sweet and get results.

There is a measure of timidity in most people. They must be encouraged and convinced that they can lead a meeting. All sorts of aid must be promised. It is a temptation to ask only those to lead a meeting who have led before and are active in the work of the church. The committee should be far-seeing enough to make the future of the prayer-meeting safe. Leaders must be developed as well

as "selected." Better have a predominance of timid, inexperienced leaders than too few.

Sometimes it is a good idea to begin by appointing the timid as assistant leaders. The experienced leaders then can give them the benefit of seeing how a successful meeting is put across. Certain parts of the meeting, such as reading the Scripture lesson and announcing the hymns, can be turned over to the assistant leader altogether. An experience or two of this sort will prepare the timid for future leadership.

Stubborn folks must be dealt with diplomatically. When they object, seek to overcome the objection with an earnestness that will impress them with the seriousness of the proposition. Don't tease or coax. If they refuse, don't get angry. Accept their refusal in a cheerful spirit, but go after them again. A consistent follow-up will eventually land even the most stubborn.

It is a good thing to have "fill-in" leaders for emergencies. The leader may take sick or be forced to be absent for some other good reason. Some may even *forget* to come. (That has happened.) If the committee has been sure that the "fill-in" is a regular attendant at the prayer-meeting, and is always prepared to speak on the topic, there will be no hitch in the meeting. Prepare for the emergency!

Amos R. Wells, in his little book "Prayer-meeting Methods," tells of an interesting custom in English prayer-meetings. "They have the practice," he writes, "of appointing for each meeting not

merely a leader, but what they call a speaker. The leader is a good executive officer, able to conduct the meeting with dispatch and vigor; but the speaker is more glib in the use of his tongue. The leader may be one of the younger members, and the speaker one of the older ones. The leader will announce the hymns, set the meeting going, read the Scripture passages, and other things of this sort, while the speaker will comment on the passages and throw out suggestions for the conduct of the meeting."

Encouragement of the timid will do more than anything else to make it easy to get their help in the future. The prayer-meeting committee should make it its business to greet the leader at the close of the meeting and sincerely and heartily commend the good points of the meeting. If, as is usually the case with beginners, the leader himself feels that he has made a complete failure, he will appreciate the encouragement and try again.

Committees should never be worried about material for leaders. Every youth is leader timber. *Anybody with brains can successfully lead a prayer-meeting if*

1. He knows it in time.
2. He has material to work with.
3. He works with the material.
4. He seeks God's guidance.
5. He seeks help from others.
6. He really leads.

Trite? Yes, but practical, as will be shown in the remaining part of this chapter and the following.

The best way to notify the leader of his appointment is in person. When this is absolutely impossible, do it by telephone or by mail.

Some prayer-meeting committees have a form letter or postal card which is sent immediately upon the leader's appointment. A convenient form is:

DEAR MR. ———: You have been selected to lead our prayer-meeting, September 4, at 6 P. M. The subject for the evening is "The Call to Service" (Isaiah 6). If convenient, please meet with the committee in the minister's study at the church next Lord's Day afternoon at three o'clock to consider your program. Believe us willing to co-operate with you in every way to make a successful prayer-meeting.

ROBERT P. COLBURN,
Chairman Prayer-meeting Committee.

A follow-up card will insure no miscarriage in the plans for the meeting. Try this one:

DEAR MR. ———: Of course you've not forgotten that you are to lead our Christian Endeavor prayer-meeting September 4, at 6 P. M. We are counting on you to give us one of our best meetings this year. ROBERT P. COLBURN,
Chairman Prayer-meeting Committee.

In addition to the personal notification, it is well to post each quarter, in the vestibule of the church, a list of the leaders for the quarter. Leaders will feel an additional responsibility when they know that they are publicly announced to lead the meeting.

The average person in the church does not have access to the material necessary to prepare to lead a prayer-meeting. The prayer-meeting committee must therefore see that the proper tools are placed in his hands.

It is not enough to thrust a religious journal containing comments on the topic into the hands of the leader and leave him to "work out his own salvation with fear and trembling." A "leaders' conference," in which the leaders can meet several weeks in advance with the members of the prayer-meeting committee and talk face to face about the problems of leading a meeting, is by far the most satisfactory plan to insure a good meeting. In advance of the conference, the committee should prepare a tentative program for each leader somewhat as follows:

TOPIC.

"Trained Conscience and Trained by Conscience."

SCRIPTURE TEXT.

Prov. 20: 27; Ps. 51: 1-3.

SELECTED SONGS.

"My Hope Is Built," "We Have an Anchor," "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go," "Lead, Kindly Light."

REFERENCE JOURNALS.

The *Christian Endeavor World* (p. 22), the *Christian Banner* (pp. 10, 11), *The Herald* (p. 21). Topics for talks, suggested or in the "Christian Endeavor Quarterly;" thoughts, Bible references, etc., will be found in these papers for use in the meeting.

SUGGESTED PLAN FOR THE MEETING.

Make this a "Clothes-line Meeting." Ask each member of the society, several hours before the meeting, to prepare a ten-word written testimony on "One Thing My Conscience Tells Me." These will be brought to the meeting. At the opening of the program furnish each member with a clothes-

pin. A clothes-line should be stretched across the front of the room. After members have read their testimonies, they will come forward and pin them on the line.

Some suggestions and hints of a general nature may be mimeographed and given to all leaders, in addition to the above material.

The prayer-meeting committee of the Second Presbyterian society, Portsmouth, O., prepared this excellent set of hints and suggestions:

Begin promptly at 6:15, although there may be only two present.

SONGS:

Select them before the meeting.
Have them familiar, but not "worn-out."
Have them easy to sing.

QUESTIONS:

Give them out not later than Sunday morning.
Instead of giving out slips to be read, use questions that members may answer in their own words.

PRAYER:

Please allow five minutes at closing for silent prayer for the minister as he preaches his evening sermon.
End the silent prayer with the Mizpah benediction.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Allow a certain time for announcements, and call for them toward the beginning of the meeting.
Dismiss the meeting at 6:55, in order to allow time for newcomers to be greeted.

AT ALL TIMES:

Do not let the meeting lag. Start it briskly, and, as soon as one item of the program is finished, start the next immediately.

When the leader has ideas of his own for use in the meeting, the committee should encourage their

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use instead of its own ideas. The committee should act at all times in the capacity of a servant, and not as a dictator. At no time should the use of the committee's tentative program be made imperative.

But the prayer-meeting committee's task does not end with the supervision of the leaders. The meeting itself needs its helpful ministrations.

When an inexperienced leader is in the chair, it is the prayer-meeting committee that fills in the pauses, warms up the cold end of the meeting and gives the nod of encouragement that will inspire the young beginner with confidence.

If the meetings seem woefully weak in prayer, something must be done. Ascertain the causes of the weakness, adopt a program and set to work. One prayer-meeting committee solved such a problem by becoming responsible for the prayer periods. The leader would first ask all to bow their heads in silent prayer and unite with him as he announced one by one the objects of their petition. He would say: "Let us ask God's presence at this meeting. . . . Pray that we may get from the topic the lessons we need. . . . Ask that the Holy Spirit may guide the leader. . . . Plead for God's blessing for absent members. . . . Pray for our minister, our church, our missionaries, our country," etc., etc. At the close of the season of prayer a short oral prayer was offered, asking God to hear and answer every petition in harmony with His divine will. Other methods were used until the prayer problem was solved.

The "clipping habit," if eradicated, calls for the aid of the prayer-meeting committee. Patient and persevering effort is essential here. One committee proceeded as follows: Step One—A list was made of the victims of "clip-itis." Step Two—The first week the clippings were handed out as usual. Step Three—The next week each one was asked to say just a word of his own after reading the clipping. Step Four—The suggestion was made that the substance of the clipping be told in his own words. Step Five—A topic was assigned, in question form, with the intimation that the clipping might furnish a helpful thought for an answer. Step Six—Complete emancipation from the clipping habit.

Every phase of the meeting should thus come under the constant observation and supervision of the prayer-meeting committee.

Is the music appropriate?

Is the participation unanimous or confined to a small group?

Is the general standard too high or too low?

Such questions should goad the committee on to the attainment of a reasonable degree of efficiency.

III.

THE SUCCESSFUL LEADER.

HELLO! Is this Miss Jones? Fine afternoon. Say, Miss Jones, could you lead our C. E. prayer-meeting to-night? An engagement? Well, now, that's too bad." Bang! goes the receiver into the hook, and it's up to the preacher or the prayer-meeting committee to lead the meeting again. But—

There's no use getting disgusted or angry about it. Miss Jones is not to be blamed. The party at the other end of the line is the guilty fellow. He had no business going leader-hunting within two or three hours of prayer-meeting time.

Such a careless, listless, catch-as-catch-can policy is the reason for the chronic complaint: "We can't get anybody to lead our meetings."

Everything depends on the leader. The lazy leader will make a lazy meeting. The snappy leader will make a snappy meeting. The spiritual leader will make a spiritual meeting. A giggling leader will make everybody else giggle. A praying leader will make a *prayer*-meeting. As the leader leads, the meeting follows. A tremendous burden is imposed upon him.

The prayer-meeting—a mighty agency for doing the King's business—is for a time committed to his care. He is responsible for leading people to think

about the King and His business. To him has been granted the privilege of using an hour or so in the King's house to tell others and help others to do the great tasks that must be accomplished in His name and for His sake. The immediate task presents itself in the topic for the evening. How shall the leader present it so that the best results may be obtained? A big job! *And all up to the leader!*

The very atmosphere of the room bears the cast of the leader's spirit. If he shies at folks, they will shy at him. If he has a glad hand for them at the door, they will reflect his social spirit. If he is in silent prayer at the leader's table, the group naturally assumes the prayerful mood.

The way he enters into the song service has its effect. If he sings a note or two and then lays aside his song-book to find his Scripture lesson, the rest of the people will gradually find something else to do besides sing. If he launches out boldly on the first word of the first stanza and keeps lifting the song without missing a measure, "let those refuse to sing who never knew our Lord!"

His introductory remarks, if analytical and enlightening, will make clear the purpose of the whole meeting. If wandering and careless, everything will become as clear as mud! and the meeting will flounder around for a whole hour.

When the program goes without a hitch, it is because the leader makes it go. Nobody forgets to blame the leader when things go wrong. The taste in people's mouths, when they step outdoors, is blamed on the leader. If the benediction was led

right, if the closing remarks were appropriate, well and good. If not—!!

What an important factor the leader is! Yet we wait until three o'clock in the afternoon, then—

"Hello! Is this Miss Jones?" etc., as we remarked at the head of this chapter.

If there is an efficient prayer-meeting committee supervising the Sunday evening meetings, the leader's path is made comparatively easy. In this discussion we take for granted that the committee has been on the job, and has given the leader proper notification and helpful instruction as to his duties. The task is now his.

No leader can expect to have a good meeting and not work hard to get it. After the tentative program of the prayer-meeting committee is in his hands, he may feel that all he has to do is to sit with hands folded in the front of the prayer-meeting-room and watch the meeting move off smoothly. He must carefully prepare himself in heart and in mind. The spiritual preparation and intellectual preparation are both essential. No meeting will succeed if the leader has neglected either. If he has had little or no preparation, and goes to the meeting attempting to "bluff it out," he will be found out in the next few minutes.

It makes no difference whether he has led prayer-meetings "a hundred times," or is a timid fellow on his "first night" job, the truth will out! The best course for the leader to follow, if he wants a successful meeting, is to start preparing himself and his program as soon as he learns he has been ap-

pointed. He should keep his eyes open to catch any ideas he can use in his meeting. Moments of prayer for the meeting should not be underestimated in point of value in preparation.

Where no system has been adopted, the prayer-meeting is an aimless sort of institution. The meeting may be a success, or, more often, may be a failure. The hymns are sung at random, the prayers are full of generalities, the remarks are scattered from "Dan to Beersheba," the meeting *drifts* on! Perchance the minister may rescue it with a brilliant closing speech, but, if he is not in the right mood, it may end in a hopeless wreck. There is no guarantee of success in a program that has no definite objective and has had no special preparation.

The leader is the one who should determine the objective and see that every minute contributes to it. The songs should be appropriate and come at moments when they will make the best and most lasting impression. The talks should be to the point. When they are not, the leader should add a few words which will switch the thought back into the channel he has chosen. Everything should be eliminated which will detract from the objective. Announcements often mar the closing moments by introducing matters wholly foreign to the whole spirit of the meeting.

The announcements should come at the beginning of the program. Let the audience go away with the fixed objective driven like a wedge into their hearts.

If the subject is "Soul-saving," the objective should be so clear that people will go home determined to be soul-winners. If the subject is "The Missionary Task," the desire to give both life and money should be awakened.

With a definite objective in mind, the mechanical planning of the program is not at all difficult.

There are certain features that are an absolute necessity to a prayer-meeting program. There must be singing, praying and talking. Too many leaders, however, get the idea that singing, praying and talking make the prayer-meeting. Some prayer-meeting committees have the same idea. For instance, one committee we know has a thousand or more multigraphed copies of this program, which it has been handing to its prospective leaders for the past five years:

Song.
Song.
Special Music.
Song.
Song (audience will rise).
Scripture Reading (with comment).
Prayer.
Brief Open Remarks.
Talks and Readings.
Synopsis.
Five Minutes of Sentence Prayers.
Announcements.
Closing Hymn and Benediction.

N. B.—The leader may rearrange the order, but is urged not to omit any of the thirteen items.

It is no wonder that the meetings of that society are mere rubber-stamp impressions.

The leader needs a vivid imagination to plan a program. He should never be tied down by a set of rules or iron-clad "suggestions." In his mind's eye he should see his people eager and anxious to be spiritually stimulated; he should hear the testimonies, get the inspiration of the prayers, thrill at the singing of appropriate soul-stirring songs, catch the vision of the larger service before him. A leader without such an imagination is like a ship's captain without joy in his ship and its destination.

Given a sane imagination, there is little trouble in program planning. There is no danger that the meeting will be of the rubber-stamp variety. However, it is well to keep in mind a few simple rules.

1. Make the Program Short.—People "get to the point" more quickly to-day than they did fifty years ago. A preacher in those "good old days" would preach for two hours and say less than the modern preacher will say in twenty minutes. There has been a great deal of fun poked at short sermons ("It takes a preacher-ette to preach a sermonette"), but the truth of the matter is that it takes a carload of brains to say in twenty minutes what a "full heart" could talk about for two hours and a half.

It will take thought—if you think!—to crowd all your plans into one short hour, but a prayer-meeting should never be run over that time. "Never" is a strong word. There are always exceptions to rules, but we have *never* seen a prayer-meeting that could not have well been confined to that schedule. "Begin on time" is a good rule, but

"Close on time" is a better one. People will go away with the feeling that it has been good to be in the house of the Lord when the meeting has not lagged or dragged.

There may be times when it is even inadvisable to continue the prayer-meeting for so long as an hour. We have known of cases where leaders would use every subterfuge, manipulate every situation and stretch every vocal chord to keep the meeting going the required length of time. After every available soul in the room had taken part, songs were sung, people were pelted with questions and urged to take part a second time, the leader commented on everything and manufactured things to comment on—all because it was "not yet half-past seven."

Quit—when the hour is up.

Quit—when the atmosphere of the room yells "Quit!"

Quit—without calling for "No. 324 in the red book" to keep things going.

Quit—when some strong testimony or climacteric moment has arrived.

Quit—before a single head begins to nod with sleep.

Quit—without ranting at folks because they seem to be indifferent.

Quit—without pleading for "some one" to "please" take the floor, as "there are just seven minutes left."

Quit—with an enthusiastic summary, an encouraging word, an appropriate song and benediction.

2. Make the Program Select.—If speakers are to be chosen for special subjects, care should be taken to get persons who know how to talk, or who have the ability to reason. Choice at random seldom brings the cherished result.

The program should, if possible, be of such high order that it will eclipse everything in the past and set a high standard for the future.

3. Make the Program Spiritual.—The prayer-meeting hour should never be made the medium of mere entertainment. A keen appreciation of the purpose of the meeting should provoke the leader to make the whole tone decidedly spiritual.

It is really saddening to see some leaders depending wholly on the mechanics of methods. "Stunts" will not create a spiritual atmosphere.

The proper respect for the opening devotional hour will do much toward giving the meeting the right start. Give God an opportunity to speak through His word. Talk to God about the meeting and the problems it presents. Instead of asking for sentence prayers in an off-hand way, the leader may give out suggested topics for prayers which have a special bearing on the meeting. Suppose, for instance, that the subject for the evening is "Progressive Christians." These prayer subjects would be appropriate:

Thank God (1) for the progressive example of Christ; (2) for the progressive leadership of the Christian church; (3) for the spirit of progress; (4) for the future and our opportunity to make it better than the past.

Ask God (1) for a vision which will make progress possible; (2) to strengthen us as we meet new problems; (3) to help us to grow in grace and knowledge; (4) to help us keep from despairing when progress is slow.

Make the most of the mountain-top moments in the meeting. When a testimony has touched the heart-strings of the group, call for prayer. When a special musical selection has made a deep impression, call for a time of silent devotion.

It is especially desirable to make the closing moments of the meeting thrill with a sense of the divine presence. These moments are as important as the opening moments, but they are often treated in a perfunctory or hustle-up-and-let's-get-through manner. When the average leader plans special features, he puts them all at the beginning of his meeting. He puts on a bold front, but forgets that a well-built meeting has a back as well as a front. Of course there should be a closing prayer and a closing song, but there is no "law of the Medes and Persians" to the effect that a meeting be closed only by a prayer and song.

I distinctly remember attending a prayer-meeting where the topic was "How to Work Together." During the closing moments we were all asked to stand in a circle with hands joined and sing "Blest Be the Tie that Binds." Then we were requested to go around the circle with sentence prayers, asking our heavenly Father for the spirit of co-operation to enter our hearts for the glory of Christ and His church. There followed a period of silent

prayer and the group gradually dispersed. It was wonderfully impressive. So much different from the meetings when the leader would rise abruptly, announce that the time was up, and say: "Let us stand and repeat the Mizpah."

A prayer hymn like

> "Take my life, and let it be
> Consecrated, Lord, to Thee,"

can sometimes be used without any benediction. It should then be sung with all heads bowed. There are many hymns which can be so used.

Try copying a quotation from some famous writer, which embodies the thought of the evening, on a large piece of paper in letters that can be easily read across the room. At the close of the meeting unroll this paper and ask all to repeat the quotation just before the benediction.

Never allow announcements to mar the closing minutes.

4. Make the Program Snappy.—Make it move from the start! Put life in the song service. Don't put a "dog" in the wheels of progress by preaching a sermon instead of leading the meeting. The preacher would have been called on to take charge if the prayer-meeting committee had expected a sermon. I have known leaders who were really conscientious about making preparation to lead a meeting who have made the mistake of preparing only themselves. This led them to write lengthy essays or get "preachy"—both meeting-killers. Set forth the object of the meeting in an interesting,

suggestive manner. Then sit down before the people begin to get bored. If you are certain *you* are not going to be long-winded, the next thing to do is to see that other folks keep from like temptation. Leaders are not the only ones who get started and can not stop.

Put on the brakes at the beginning by limiting each speaker to a certain number of minutes. Any one can say in five minutes all that is necessary to be said in any prayer-meeting. If the speaker's brain machinery is of the eight-day-clock variety, do not be afraid to stop him when the time is up. Of course this must be done in a wisely diplomatic way and without the slightest trace of officiousness.

It is good training to have a "Minute Meeting," where everybody is required to keep within the sixty-second limit. Those who speak exactly one minute may be awarded the sobriquet "Minute Men."

It sounds almost sacrilegious to suggest putting snap in the prayers, but it has been an observation of mine that sentence prayers are generally more effective than those that take in everything from creation to the day of judgment.

Keep folks from going to sleep while you are helping them go to glory!

5. Make the Program One of Service.—If people can not go away from the meeting feeling that it has helped them, there has been some defect in the leading. As you plan your program, you should ask yourself the question, "Will this item help

somebody?'' Why not make the spirit of this old hymn your spirit:

"Lord, speak to me that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone.

"Oh, use me, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when and where,
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share.''

Then the meeting can not go far wrong in its simple, sublime purpose of service.

The fullest dependence on God and the guiding of His Holy Spirit is necessary if the program is to be well led.

When the leader fully realizes the obligation under which he is placed in leading a group of people to think of the King and His kingdom, he realizes his own limitations.

He who knows it all and feels that he is more than capable of doing the thing that is required will fail. The mere fact that he feels that way about it is proof positive that he does not realize the importance of the thing he has been asked to do. He must realize how much he needs God's help. It is said that the fishermen of the Adriatic are accustomed to pray each morning as they launch their boats: "Lord, watch over us this day, our boat is so little and the sea is so wide." If the leader approaches this matter of leading his meeting in this spirit, he will be well on the way to success.

It is not sufficient, however, that he shall realize his own weakness. He must depend upon God or suffer from inferiority complex. Unless he is divinely led, he can not expect to lead others to higher ground. His real preparation must begin on his knees. What right has any one to do God's work without first of all going aside to talk it over with Him?

The "pre-prayer service" will do much to help the leader appreciate this. There should never be a prayer-meeting held without a "pre-prayer service." Five minutes before the meeting the leader, the minister and the prayer-meeting committee should kneel in prayer in an adjoining room, asking God's blessing upon and guidance of the leader and the meeting. Every person in the "pre-prayer service" should pray. No one should be admitted to it who will not pray. The prayers should be short and be brought to a close so the meeting following can begin on time.

Members of the prayer-meeting committee should take the burden of the meeting on their hearts in prayer for the duration of the whole hour.

With God's guidance anybody can successfully lead a prayer-meeting.

No leader who does all the singing, talking and praying will be successful. He may suggest songs to sing, ideas to talk about or points for purposeful prayers, but he must do little more than suggest. The secret of making a meeting move is in enlisting the co-operation of everybody present. The leader should enter the meeting sure of the results.

He should have obtained the consent of certain ones to assume the responsibility of the vital portions of the meeting. Everybody present should be asked to pray, talk on some subject, or have part in the opening exercises. The more timid should not be overlooked. Some appropriate poem or other quotation may be given them with the request that they read it.

The leader who does it all himself will make a poor leader.

The Leader-Who-Does-It-All—
A very egoistic elf—
Is blind to what the rest can do;
Is mucilaged upon himself.
Over the whole prayer-meeting hour
He manages somehow to sprawl,
And runs the thing from A to Z—
The Leader-Who-Does-It-All.

The Leader-Who-Does-It-All
Is very certain, in his pride,
The entire program would be spoiled
If he, perchance, were laid aside.
He talks and talks and talks and talks,
He speaks on all things, great and small;
He's It, he'd have you understand—
The Leader-Who-Does-It-All.

The Leader-Who-Does-It-All
Will not be asked to lead some day,
And find, to his intense surprise,
Most everybody glad and gay.
He'll see the "dead ones" take on life—
Spring up as if released from thrall—
And go rejoicing on without
The Leader-Who-Does-It-All.

(Apologies to Amos R. Wells.)

To be a successful leader, *lead!* Webster says "lead" means "to go before; to guide." That is it, exactly! The leader who allows circumstances to keep him from being at the helm of things will be a failure. If he arrives ten minutes late and finds the audience already gathered, he has failed that much. He should "go before" all others and be creating the right sort of atmosphere for the meeting. If he asks, "Has some one a favorite hymn he would like to have sung?" he is not leading the spirit of the song service. If he asks, "Shall we have a few prayers?" instead of, "We shall now have several sentence prayers, led by John Jones and closed by Mary Mims," there are some qualities of leadership that are lacking. If he allows long, embarrassing lulls to occur in the meeting, he is not "guiding," he is just warming the bench. Listen, leaders!

Don't be scared to death. Have confidence in yourself that, through the grace of God, you can lead the meeting successfully. The leader who does not believe he can, seldom does. You can! Sublime confidence by the help of God—it is the general manager, the director, the pusher, the master mind! It decides that the thing can be done, and spurs, drives and inspires the leader to do it. It is the breeder of courage, the foundation of resolve.

Don't get cold feet. Warm up all over and never admit the word "f-a-i-l-u-r-e" is in your dictionary.

Don't squeak, whisper or stutter—talk! Better yell at the top of your voice and make the front

row beg for mercy than talk down in your shoes and let the back row go to sleep.

Don't forget to smile. Reverence is rarely seen in solemn faces. The worshipful spirit comes naturally to those who smile.

Don't be listless. "A-l-e-r-t" should be written all over your physiognomy.

Don't let anybody get a monopoly on the meeting. Act as official "trust-buster" if occasion demands.

Don't let the meeting drag. Get up enough steam at the beginning to keep the prayer-meeting train going until everybody gets off at Victory Heights.

Don't let it run away. A prayer-meeting not under control will soon be off the track, and worse than no prayer-meeting at all.

Don't forget to let the Holy Spirit pilot you. There is no surer Guide.

IV.

SUCCESSFUL PROMOTION.

THE Christian Endeavor prayer-meeting is not a popular institution. Once in awhile you hear of a church which has overflow audiences at its young people's meeting, but this is a rare thing.

When you ask folks to come to the prayer-meeting their excuses are:

"I'm too tired."

"Two services on Sunday are enough."

"Oh, it's too dry!"

All worn-out, threadbare makeshifts! The truth of the matter is young people will make excuses just as long as the prayer-meeting does not meet their needs, or has no definite purpose and is run in a half-hearted manner.

One of the most efficient C. E. workers in Memphis, Tenn., has found, through a "Welcoming Committee," a fine way to attract folks to the prayer-meeting.

His "Welcoming Committee" cordially greets all those who come to the prayer-meetings, sees that the different ones all meet one another, acts as usher in seating those who come late, hands out song-books, and in every way promotes a spirit of friendliness in every meeting.

In a nutshell, the "Welcoming Committee" meets, greets and seats all who come.

The members wear badges on which are printed "WELCOME," "HOWDY," "SHAKE HANDS," "GLAD TO SEE YOU," "COME IN," and other pleasant greetings which will "break the ice." Wearing these badges also assists the members of this committee by making it easier for them to approach strangers, and also shows the strangers that these committee members are doing their Christian duty and not simply trying to be forward.

There is no doubt that people crave society, association, sociability. There are some people in every community who are so situated that the church is the only organization ministering to their social life. The Christian Endeavor society is their only chance to rub elbows with others! The lobby of the prayer-meeting room can well be made a place for Christian greetings and fellowship.

The great corporations which have things to sell to the public use ink almost recklessly, but with tremendous selling results. Ink is practically as free as the air. Corporations have no copyright or patent on ink. Its selling power can easily and successfully be utilized to "sell" the prayer-meeting. A practical use of ink will get people to thinking about the meeting and soon induce them to come.

Posters.—Almost every society has some one on the roll who can wield a pen or brush. Draft this individual, get him to consecrate his pen or brush. Give him some cardboard and ink and set him to work for the prayer-meeting.

Posters may be used in the vestibule of the church with excellent effect. As soon as one has served its purpose it should be taken down and replaced by one for the next week. Nothing looks worse than an array of out-of-date advertising material hanging on the walls of the church. Nothing so soon cancels the results of this type of advertising.

Bulletin-boards. — A well-kept bulletin-board bearing programs, helpful material on the topics, snapshot photos of various society activities, serve to keep people informed about Christian Endeavor, especially the prayer-meeting. Information begets interest.

Topic Cards.—Every one ought to have at hand information about the prayer-meeting topics and leaders for six months. A topic card serves the purpose well.

Change the form of the card occasionally for novelty's sake. Print the program on a fan, on a folder, on a calendar. Don't send out the same old thing every time. People will get the habit of throwing it in the waste-basket.

Besides the cold facts and the necessary information, add such catchy phrases and suggestions as the following:

The Christian Endeavor prayer-meeting that refuses to go is a goner.

Talk is cheap. Use lots of it for our prayer-meeting.

A successful prayer-meeting comes in *cans;* a poor prayer-meeting comes in *can'ts.*

Or— SIX B'S FOR THE LEADERS!

Be prepared.
Be on time.
Be prayerful.
Be resourceful.
Be sociable.
Be helpful.

See that everybody gets a topic card. By all means use topic cards.

WHAT TO BRING TO THE MEETING.

1. Bring your own Bible; every workman prefers his own tools.

2. Bring the topic—in your memory, not on a card.

3. Bring some matured thought on the theme—from your Bible study.

4. Bring the best illustration or application of the theme you have found in your reading or other research.

5. Bring some wish, aspiration or sense of need. Sated appetites are the hardest to cater to.

6. Bring your attention; a wandering mind never gets to God.

7. Bring your sympathies; give more than you expect to get, and you will get more than you expect.

8. Bring your smiles and cheerful looks and emphasize the beauty of holiness.

9. Bring your friend or a stranger. How easy to increase the attendance by a few personal invitations.

10. Bring a large expectation and God will fill it.

The Calvary Baptist Young People's society, Washington, D. C., sent to each member the following neatly printed fall greeting:

DEAR MEMBER:—With the opening of the Christian Endeavor season come new and greater opportunities. A share of the responsibility rests upon every member. Let us begin the year by attending the weekly meetings with more consistency; let us enter into the spirit of them with greater enthusiasm; let us undertake our committee duties with renewed vigor, and let us put forth our best efforts to increase our efficiency as a society. Yours for advancement,

H. A. LUFBURROW.

Business men are unanimous in their belief in the "follow-up" letter. Why not use this system to build up your prayer-meeting? How about a series of letters following these ideas:

THE "WHY" SERIES.

1. Why go to prayer-meeting?
2. Why we need you.
3. Why you need us.
4. Let's get together!

Outside Signs.—Christian Endeavor societies need a sign on the outside of the church building to direct folks to the place of their meeting. The Christian Endeavor society of the First Christian Church, Roanoke, Va., has these words painted on a large, frosted electric-light globe hanging over the outside street entrance to its prayer-meeting room.

PRAYER-MEETING
C. E.
WELCOME!

Whatever kind of sign is used, care should be taken that it is put in a prominent place and lighted at night.

A statement concerning the prayer-meeting should always be made on the board in front of the church building bearing the schedule of church services.

Blotters.—Everybody uses a blotter. Have the following printed attractively on several hundred and distribute them wisely:

> Don't blot the prayer-meeting from your memory.
> Every Wednesday evening at the proper time.
> Euclid Avenue Church of Christ.
> A spiritual tonic for you.

There are many other novel ways of using printer's ink. Keep in touch with the latest publicity methods. The best ideas should unhesitatingly be used to further the spiritual work of your society through the prayer-meeting.

It is rather a common thing for the lookout committee chairman to call up a friend or so a few hours before prayer-meeting time and invite said friend or so to come to the meeting. Some societies would have slim crowds if it were not for the telephone system.

A fine idea! Efficiently worked, it may completely solve the attendance-promotion problem in some places.

A Congregational society of Syracuse, N. Y., appointed a telephone committee to look after its prayer-meeting delinquents. The chairman of this committee checked up the attendance during the prayer-meeting and the names of the absent members were given to two members of the committee. Twice during the week the delinquent was called to the phone and informed that he had been absent. Of course he knew it, but the committee members wanted him to know that they knew it too—that he was missed, that his place was empty, that the meeting was a little poorer because of his absence, that he ought to plan immediately to be present at the next meeting.

Too much trouble? Not if you have determined to have a successful prayer-meeting!

To interest young people in attendance at the meetings it is sometimes wise to resort to contests. If they are properly conducted, there is no reason why they should not help materially. They will detract in no way from the devotional atmosphere of the meeting. Some of the very best contests that have been tried are suggested here:

A Railroad Contest.—Divide the society into two sections—the "New York Central" and the "Rock Island." Set the goal and agree upon the points to be awarded. Suspend two passenger trains, made of pasteboard, on wires which run across the front of the prayer-meeting room. See which train can get across first in a given time. If one side is slow in its work, replace the passenger train with a freight train and watch them speed up. Mileage

should be awarded for visitors, new members, participation in the program, etc.

A "Red, White and Blue" Contest.—Divide the membership into three sections—the "Reds," the "Whites" and the "Blues." Draw three U. S. flags on the blackboard of the prayer-meeting room. Over the first flag tack a placard bearing the word "Red." Put "White" and "Blue" placards over the other flags. Use red, white and blue chalk. Cover all the stars in the blue field with pieces of blue paper. As the divisions bring in new persons to the prayer-meetings the stars are to be uncovered. One new member counts one star. The division that uncovers all its stars first is the victor.

Ford-Packard Silent Contest.—The two sections for the contest are dubbed "Fords" and "Packards." Five points are awarded to each individual who brings a new recruit. The records are kept by a secretary for each side, and no announcement of progress is made until the last night of the contest, when the secretaries reveal their reports. The "Fords" should occupy seats on one side of the room and "Packards" on the other side each Sunday evening.

"Fill Two Seats" Contest.—This is a one-night contest. At a given prayer-meeting divide the audience into two groups, seating each person so that he will have a vacant chair to his right. Label both these chairs with this person's name and announce that everybody is expected to see that two seats are occupied at the next prayer-meeting. See which side is the more active in seating folks accord-

ing to the labels on the chairs at this meeting.

The secret of success in conducting a contest to increase prayer-meeting attendance is to keep the spirit of rivalry subservient to the real purpose of the prayer-meeting. Much personal work and visiting are essential. Everybody must keep sweet. Get folks to come. Be sure to give them something worth while when they do come.

Many societies have developed an intense interest in the prayer-meeting by working a happy combination idea. Almost every society has its mission-study class, its class in personal work, or some other kind of study class during the year. There are persons so constituted that they will only go to a religious meeting once a week. They will neglect the prayer-meeting to attend the study class, or *vice versa*. This problem can be solved and the prayer-meeting made more attractive by a happy combination of the study and devotional ideas. Devote the first half-hour to a consideration of the text being used by the study class, and the last half-hour to the prayer-meeting. Where the minister is expected to act as instructor for the study class this plan will give him an extra night on his week's schedule of meetings.

Wise promotion of interest and attendance is absolutely essential if the prayer-meeting is to widen its reach and achieve all that it should.

IV.

SUCCESSFUL WORSHIP PROGRAMS.

DESPITE the fact that we speak glibly of Christian Endeavor *prayer*-meetings, too many of them are in no sense worship gatherings. The meetings are held in an atmosphere of flippancy. Yesterday's ball game, or Annabelle's latest date, or a neighborhood party, are the themes uppermost in the good-natured social banter. Apparently oblivious to the sacredness of the hour, the thoughtless crowd is suddenly "called to order" and "the program" proceeds.

Instead of attempting to create a new atmosphere, the chorister announces a song which serves to accentuate flippancy rather than promote the spirit of a *prayer*-meeting. A good many of the songs in the books available for Christian Endeavor use are merely jingles. They effectually neutralize any sacred emotion which might be stirring in youthful breasts. Prayer smothers and dies in such an atmosphere, and entreaties of the leader for "sentence prayers" fall on desert ground.

All through the evening the ball game and Annabelle's date have a subconscious advantage over the theme under discussion. Not infrequently the irrelevant becomes the rule instead of the exception, and the evening's program gets nowhere.

The Necessity of Worship

The Christian Endeavor prayer-meeting is not designed to be devoted wholly to a formal worship program. It is an expressional hour of somewhat wider range. Here young people encourage one another to think and live as Christ would have them think and live. But certainly there can be no adequate religious expression apart from worship, for worship is a part of that expression. Worship must create the atmosphere, and, *more*, it must be an integral part of the expressional program.

Worship establishes and maintains spiritual contact with God. A trolley-car without contact with electric power is helpless. So is youth apart from the heavenly sources of spiritual power. The crowding temptations of life will overwhelm the young person who is trying to follow Christ, unless his spiritual contacts are continuously strong and vital.

Worship creates right attitudes of mind. Youth must wrestle with the ego. At no period in life is there such smug satisfaction of soul. Worship confronts youth with an almighty God who humbles the heart and mellows the nature into a harmonious balance. The mind then reflects right attitudes and is able to properly evaluate the things of life.

Worship satisfies the great need of the soul. Youth is seeking something! That something is soul satisfaction. It can be found only in God. Worship helps youth to find God. It is an outlet for the joy of thankfulness and salvation. It opens the gates to hopes and aspirations.

Worship reveals soul experiences to others and thus becomes a bond of congeniality.

Worship increases the faith of youth. Daily youth is sorely tried. Its springs must be constantly renewed at the throne of God.

Worship increases love and respect for sacred things. Flippancy vanishes when the soul is bowed before God.

Worship creates a new fellowship in bonds of spiritual experience. Youth will never know happier relationships than those of Christian Endeavor, if the ties are tightly bound in service and worship "for Christ and the church."

Worship brings new courage and hope and strength for the tasks and the problems of the Christian life.

Worship programs in Christian Endeavor meet this need. They are all the more essential since 90 per cent. of our young people come from homes where family worship is a forgotten institution, and fully 50 per cent. do not attend the morning or evening worship service of the church. If Christian Endeavor fails to furnish spiritual exercise for the souls of youth, who will meet this need?

Worship and Christian Endeavor

While realizing the necessity for and the values of worship, it is no easy matter correctly to determine what use shall be made of worship programs in Christian Endeavor. Certain phases of worship belong exclusively to the morning and evening services of the church assembly.

Christian Endeavor is the expressional or training function of the church for its youth. It must keep itself well within these limits or it overlaps, obstructs and devitalizes other functions or organizations. Worship as a part of the Christian Endeavor program, therefore, would seem essential (1) to give proper atmosphere to the prayer-meeting and (2) to awaken and nurture the spiritual life of Endeavorers. Such worship programs as may be used should be simple and effective.

A tendency toward elaborate worship programs is fatal to the primary purpose of Christian Endeavor. Some societies have already "gone to seed" on what somebody mistakenly has taught them to consider worship. They spend hours, days and even weeks "practicing" for worship. They march up and down aisles to get the right step and swing for the processional, affecting attitudes of holding the Bible, posturing the figure and rolling the eyes. They have "treasure chests" filled with robes, incense and censers for particular occasions. Their programs are perfect allegories like the mass, or liturgical monstrosities which make worship little more than the mummery of automatons. Liturgical churches may find their young people engaged eventually in laying unclean hands upon their very altars, and non-liturgical churches may some day discover a new heresy in their midst. Such extremism has no place in Christian Endeavor. Youth, with its natural distaste for repression and its desire for free expression, prefers life, light and the freshness of personal access to God, to asceticism in any form.

Westminster Abbey is a worshipful spot, but it is also full of dead men's bones.

Without examining the historical forms of worship, we can use the example of our Lord and our common sense in solving the problem. Christ urged the natural, normal spiritual nurture. He advised praying in secret (Matt. 6:5-7), the development of constant, personal communion of the individual with God. The Christian Endeavor Quiet Hour will ever be superior to any mere form of public worship in the society rooms, however carefully and scientifically prepared.

Christ taught His disciples to pray "without vain repetitions" after the manner of the model prayer (Matthew 6). This is the simple voice of a child's heart's desire before a loving father. After our Lord's ascent to glory, the early church employed hymns and Scripture readings as simple methods of worship. Emphasis was always placed on simplicity. The participants were constantly enjoined to do all "in decency and order," "according to God's will" and with "the spirit and the understanding." Christian Endeavor societies, within the limits of their function, should practice after some such guiding principles as these:

Reverence,
Dignity,
Order,
Simplicity,
Adjustment to the needs of youth,
Honoring Christ, His word and His church,
Variety and freedom of expression.

With such a conception of the use of worship in the Christian Endeavor prayer-meeting, the prayer-meeting committee may proceed to plan with the leader to build worship programs.

The committee should develop a well-ordered unity, avoiding patchwork creations. Start with a definite aim in view and work logically toward it. Like a good story, it should reach a climax which drives home the central truth of the hour. This climax should come just before the period of general participation, so that the spirit and purpose of the topic will stand out clearly and unmistakably. A wise leader will conserve the results of the worship period. An impressive ending should be planned for the closing moments.

To get best results the committee must itself be in the mood for worship before it attempts to undertake its task.

As an example of worship-program building, the following is suggested. (Note how the opening strains of the stately old hymn create an atmosphere of dignity and power. The "Voice" recognizes these as attributes of the almighty God to whom we humbly bow. We recognize our stewardship and call upon our all-wise Master to teach us His will. This He does in the parable of the talents. In the song service we rejoice in our new-found task. In prayer we dedicate all that we have and are to His service. After the period of general participation comes the crowning moment, refreshing our minds and leaving the lasting impression of a life dedicated to Christian stewardship.)

A MODEL WORSHIP PROGRAM.

TOPIC: GOOD STEWARDS OF THE LORD JESUS.
(Scripture: Matt. 26: 14-22.)

MOMENT OF QUIET.

While heads are bowed pianist plays softly the principal theme of "Pomp and Circumstance."

VOICE:

"Jehovah reigneth; let the earth rejoice!"—Ps. 97: 1.

"O Jehovah, how manifold are thy works!
In wisdom thou hast made them all;
The earth is full of thy riches." —Ps. 104: 24.

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;
The world, and they that dwell therein.
. . . . . .
Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord?
Or who shall stand in his holy place?
He that hath pure hands and a clean heart."
—Ps. 24: 1, 3.

HYMN: "A Charge to Keep I Have."

INVOCATION (in concert):

O Lord and Master of men, we call upon Thee to make us humble sharers in Thy divine bounty, that we may serve Thee faithfully, and our fellow-man in all diligence. Teach us Thy will and show us Thy way. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: "The Talents" (Matt. 26: 14-22).

Illustrated with stereopticon slides. Read slowly and deliberately as pictures are thrown on screen.

HAPPY SONG SERVICE:

Selected stanzas from "This Is My Father's World," "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee," "Help Somebody To-day," "What Hast Thou Given?"

PRAYER BY MINISTER.

Prayer song, "Have Thine Own Way."

PERIOD OF GENERAL PARTICIPATION.

CLOSING MOMENTS:

Have a competent reader give Lefere's "My Talent."

MIZPAH BENEDICTION.

Of course this is simply a "model program," and the dictionary definition for "model" is "a small imitation of the real thing." Your committee may build *real* worship programs by building according to the seven fundamental principles previously mentioned. Here is a suggested outline which preserves these principles:

A. Before the Period of General Participation.
  I. Instrumental Prelude or Moment of Quiet.
  II. Call to Worship.
    1. Scripture quotation or poem.
    2. Hymn.
  III. Praise and Prayer.
    1. Invocation.
    2. Hymns.
    3. Scripture and prayer.
    4. Prayer song.
B. After the Period of General Participation.
  I. Period of Prayer.
    1. Sentence prayers, or
    2. Silent prayer, or
    3. Prayer songs, etc.
  II. Benediction.

Variety in Worship Programs

Every caution should be taken to prevent too strict adherence to this or any other order. The best plan can become stale. Strawberry shortcake with whipped cream looks like heaven as a palate tickler to 99 and 44-100 per cent. of the American people, but to have strawberry shortcake three times a day as the sole item of diet for even the shortest month on the calendar would stifle the appetite of a glutton. There must be variety!

An ingenious committee will discover many worship plans. Here are some:

Pianologues.—While the pianist plays some familiar tune a reader gives an appropriate story, poem or Scripture reading.

Radio Hymn Time.—A Cincinnati society has a radio in its room. At the prayer-meeting hour a local broadcasting station observes "Hymn Time," when a quartet of noted singers gives a concert of well-known hymns of the church. The Endeavorers often tune in on this program and use it in a most effective way.

Silent Direction.—A blackboard placed in front of the society may be used exclusively for an outline of the worship programs. If the written suggestions are complete enough, the program may proceed without any audible announcements whatever.

Dramatization and Pantomime.—Scripture lessons or hymns may occasionally be dramatized or rendered in form of pantomime. The story of the good Samaritan is easily played, and so are that of the prodigal son and scores of other Bible incidents. Hymns like "In Christ There Is No East or West," "Where He Leads Me" and "Holy Bible, Book Divine" lend themselves to pantomime. This should, however, never be made a feature of a program of worship unless well prepared and done with dignity and grace.

Illustrated Hymns and Scripture Selections.—If the church possesses a stereopticon or balopticon, it should be frequently used to flash colored portrayals of hymn and Scripture. These pictures are

available from the extensive libraries of film and slide companies and occasionally from public libraries. Be sure that an expert operator handles the machine, and that he understands what the reader is going to do, and when.

Theme Memory Songs.—The song leader may choose a group of familiar songs in harmony with the topic for the evening, and at an appropriate time lead the society in singing choruses or first stanzas from memory, blending one after another into a harmonious and impressive whole.

Choruses of Sentiment and Emotion.—At psychological moments groups may voluntarily introduce softly sung choruses (without instrumental accompaniment) like:

"Into my heart,
Into my heart,
Come into my heart, Lord Jesus;
Come in to-day,
Come in to stay;
Come into my heart, Lord Jesus."

Victrola Records.—Instrumental preludes may be varied by the occasional introduction of recorded selections, such as "Largo" (from Handel's "Xerxes"), "Largo" (from Dvorjak's "New World Symphony"), "Silent Night," "Traumerei," "Spring Song," "Prayer" (from Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana"), "The Palms," "Sonata Pathetique," etc.

Picture Talks.—Appropriate colored Bible pictures (not smaller than 10 x 12 inches) may be exhibited with good effect during the reading of the

Scripture lesson or the singing of some special musical number. Sometimes the story of how some great religious picture came to be painted has worship value.

Messages in Song.—Once in awhile hymn stanzas may be used as an outline for a devotional talk. The first stanza is sung, followed by appropriate remarks on its theme. Then the second stanza and comment, and so on until the entire hymn is sung.

Special-day Programs. — Occasionally a whole evening may be given over to special programs of worship, such as "A Christmas Service," "An Installation of Officers," "Mothers' Day," "Thanksgiving Day," "Life Service Day." Appropriate devotional settings give such special events a deeper spiritual significance.

Method in Prayer.—Elsewhere in this volume are suggested varied ways of encouraging every Endeavorer to participate in public prayer. Here unusual caution must be taken that the prayers may not become mechanical and lifeless. It is possible to rob this holy privilege of its vital and devout meaning.

VI.

ONE HUNDRED AND ONE PRAYER-MEETING PLANS.

THOUSANDS of Christian Endeavor societies are having successful prayer-meetings.

The fact of the matter is that any society can. If others can do it, you can do it.

No one plan will guarantee success. It may take a hundred and one different ways to meet the needs of your society.

Success is progressive. Every week the old question will rear its head, "How shall we do it this week?" We must meet it with *something different* every time.

The remainder of this volume is devoted to one hundred and one plans which have been used successfully throughout Endeavordom.

When these plans have been used threadbare—Invent *something different!*

1. A Blackboard Meeting.—Here is a hint from China, a plan tried by a Christian Endeavor society in that country. Just before the meeting a half-dozen names are written on the blackboard by the prayer-meeting committee. Those whose names are on the blackboard are expected to take part at once, and in the order in which their names appear. This plan prevents the awful pause when

the leader throws the meeting open for general participation, and it also encourages all to come prepared, since their names *might* be on the blackboard. The plan has another good point. It prevents the same persons from always speaking first and crowding out the more timid. It varies the speaking part of the meeting.

2. A Stand-up Meeting.—As a very effective way of gaining confidence, try a Stand-up Meeting. Announce at the beginning of the meeting that every one is expected to rise and face the society when speaking. Explain that this is really the easiest way. Faces are not so terrifying to speakers as backs. Faces give real inspiration. Urge the members to give the plan a fair trial. If you once get the custom established, the members will not go back to the old, listless method of speaking while seated.

3. A Fisherman's Meeting.—This proved successful in a Beloit (Wis.) Presbyterian society. The members met an hour before the regular time and held a brief consecration meeting. Then all went out to call up friends, to go after people in their homes, to pick up acquaintances on the street and invite them to the meeting. The net could, indeed, hardly hold them all, for the room was full that night. Although this was then the smallest society in the city, it had the largest prayer-meeting.

4. An Advocate Meeting.—Many Bible characters have defied evil. This galaxy of heroes can furnish a most interesting evening for your society.

Plan to have their stories told in the meeting, assigning one character to each of a number of members. Ask them to act as the "advocates" of the characters they represent, explaining and defending their acts. The following are some of the "cases" that may be assigned in advance:

Abraham against the five kings (Gen. 14:14-16).
Moses against Pharaoh (Ex. 5:1).
Samuel against Saul (1 Sam. 15:23, 24).
Nathan against David (2 Sam. 12:1).
Jeremiah against the king (Jeremiah 21).
Daniel against Darius (Daniel 6).
The three Hebrews against the king (Daniel 3).
Amos against Amaziah (Amos 7:10-17).
John the Baptist against Herod (Matt. 14:4).
Jesus against Pilate (John 18).
Paul against the people (Acts 24).

Among those in secular history who come within the same category are: Luther against the Pope, Savonarola against Lorenzo the Magnificent, John Knox against Queen Mary, and Bishop Ken against King Charles.

5. A Fish-pond Meeting.—Provide a fish-pond, line and hook and a screen, behind which some one is stationed with clippings, topics for talks, Scripture references, etc. Every one will be asked to come forward, throw the fishing-line behind the screen and get his or her assignment for the meeting. Such a plan will greatly encourage impromptu participation.

6. A Glad Meeting.—First of all, the social committee will require every one who enters the

prayer-meeting room to smile. The glad spirit will continue in songs selected because of their optimistic vein. The leader may read sections of Scripture with admonitions of joy. Ask some one to give a brief review of "Pollyanna." An interesting feature of the program would be a series of short talks on "Why I Am Glad" for some seeming disaster.

7. A Name Meeting.—Announce, by means of placards, personal work, etc., that each person who attends this meeting will be expected to give a talk containing only as many words as there are letters in his full name. Persons taking part will give their full names, together with the total number of letters, before making their talk. John Smith will probably find it hard to express his thoughts, but Annabelle Catherine Scarborough will be more blessed. The novelty of the meeting will appeal to many.

8. An "At the Cross" Meeting.—Arrange a tall, white cross on the platform in the prayer-meeting room. The opening service can be in the form of an unveiling. There should be a short talk by the leader on what the cross means in the life of present-day Christians. During the singing of "At the Cross," the cross may be unveiled. Before opening the meeting for general participation, the leader should announce that the spirit of the whole meeting must be the "giving spirit." The announcement of the character of the meeting should be made several weeks in advance, everybody being urged to bring a gift, small or large, for the

poor of the community or for general missionary purposes. As each member takes part, he will advance to the foot of the cross and deposit his gift. This sort of meeting is especially appropriate at the Thanksgiving or Christmas season.

9. A Resolution Meeting.—Of course, you've guessed it! This is a New Year meeting. Place a basket on the leader's table containing a large number of strips of paper bearing New Year resolutions. Before time for participation, ask those present to come forward and draw a resolution from the basket. Each one drawing a resolution should be asked to tell in his own words why it might be appropriately adopted, either individually or as the society's motto for the new year.

10. A Sentence Meeting.—Each prayer, testimony, Bible verse and answer to a question in this meeting should be confined to the length of one sentence. As nearly as possible, each of the utterances of the hour—the announcements, the directions of the chorister, and all the rest—should be but one sentence in length. Such a meeting will serve to remind folks that all participation should be short and keenly alive.

11. A Question Contest.—Divide the people present into two sections, one sitting on one side of the room and one on the other. The leader will prepare a series of questions dealing with the topic, and propound the questions to each side in turn. If one side is unable to answer a given question, it will then be referred to the other side. A correctly answered question scores one. Inter-

est may be added if the sides are chosen in the old-fashioned "spelling-bee" style.

12. A Self-betterment Meeting. — Make the avowed purpose of this evening the arousing of the young life of the church to the duties and responsibilities which are theirs, and urge the decision for life-work. After the leader has stated the purpose of the meeting, have a trio of talks by business and professional men of the community. A leading business man may speak on "How I Have Sought to Better Myself in Business." A leading teacher in the schools might have for his subject, "How I Have Sought to Better My Educational Opportunities." Your minister, on "How I Have Sought to Better My Religious Opportunities."

13. A Telephone Meeting.—As people arrive, give them numbers, making sure they are not consecutive. When the meeting is opened for general participation, the leader will act as "Central" and call the numbers. Those holding the numbers called will rise and take their part in the meeting. If the leader thinks best, the numbers may be placed on the blackboard, and members of the society, at will, may do the calling. Call on the local telephone office for suggestions as to the most effective setting for such a meeting. They may be willing to lend some telephone paraphernalia.

14. A Thermometer Meeting.—Draw an outline of a thermometer on the blackboard in white chalk. Get red chalk for the mercury. Appoint some one to chalk up the rises in mercury. Let a clipping

count one degree; a Scripture reading, two degrees; an original talk, five degrees. Any person may take part as many times as he desires.

15. An Alphabet Roll-call.—The secretary will call the letters of the alphabet, pausing after each letter for the members whose surnames begin with that letter to take part in the meeting. At the close of the meeting it would be interesting to hear the secretary read the list of members who were not present.

16. A Reporters' Meeting. — Appoint several members of the society to act as "reporters." They will secure copies of recent religious journals and clip interesting articles concerning church and Christian Endeavor progress. Fifteen minutes may be given to reports from these reporters.

17. A State Roll-call.—To vary the calling of the roll at consecration meetings, call upon the members to take part by States. Call the States in alphabetical order and have those born in the State called to rise and take part. Never call the roll twice the same way at consecration meetings. Monotony makes the meeting dry and uninteresting. If the plan suggested does not suit your society, invent one which will.

18. An Evangelistic Meeting. — Pattern your program after that of a modern revival meeting. A live leader of song should have charge of the music. The songs should be songs of soul-winning. Have a number of church-members to give brief testimonies and urge the young people to make decisions for Christ. The minister should be in-

vited to make a closing exhortation and hear the confessions of faith, if such is the usual order. Personal work prior to the meeting itself will make it more effective in every way.

19. A First-step Meeting. — Arrange to have those who never take any part in the meetings, other than reading clippings, to give short talks. Call on those to pray who have never before offered public prayer. Urge non-members to line up with the society. The prayer-meeting committee, in conjunction with the leader, should plan these features long beforehand, and render all assistance necessary to those whom they expect to take first steps. The idea can be carried still further than suggested.

20. A Move-up Meeting.—Keep the two front rows of seats vacant. Announce that all who take part in the meeting by original testimony will come forward and occupy the front seats. Those who read clippings or Scripture verses will come forward and occupy the second row of seats. Everybody will want to be "down in front" before the meeting closes. Almost twice the usual number will participate under such an incentive. Announce the meeting well in advance.

21. A Paint-the-church Meeting.—On a blackboard or a large sheet of cardboard or paper draw the simple outlines of a church. Indicate as many separate boards and surfaces on the building as your society has members. Plan to have all members present and take some part. Give out subjects for talks and prayers plenty of time before-

hand. When some one takes part, color part of the church solidly. Aim to have every part of the building colored before the close of the meeting. This will stimulate participation and make a very interesting meeting.

22. A Missionary Camp-fire Meeting.—Assign six leading mission fields to as many young people. Ask each to prepare a five-minute talk on one of these lands. Make an artificial camp-fire in the center of the room (placing an electric light or a strong flashlight under red cloth covered with fire-wood). Extinguish all other lights in the room and group the people on the floor around the camp-fire. After hearing from the six representatives, give opportunity for general participation of the society.

23. A Poetry Meeting.—Ask each member of the society to find a poem or stanza of a poem which deals with the subject under consideration and read it at the meeting. It will be very interesting to see how different poets deal with the subject. Fifteen or twenty minutes spent in this way will prove both novel and instructive.

24. A Purely PRAYER-meeting.—Before the meeting, the leader, the minister and members of the prayer-meeting committee should meet together for a ten-minute pre-prayer service, praying for the success of the meeting. Let all the songs be prayer songs; let each person's contribution be by prayer only. There will be sentence prayers, chain prayers, circle prayers, the Lord's Prayer, silent prayer, etc.

25. A Candlelight Service.—As the Endeavorers assemble, each is given a small candle. (The usual little candles used on home Christmas trees are all right and inexpensive.) When the time comes for volunteers to take part in the service, each one who does so lights his candle, arises, makes a short talk or does whatever he decides upon as his part. In connection with this service, sing "The Light of the World Is Jesus."

26. A "Go A-visiting" Meeting.—An Endeavor society in Newport, Ky., while the church was being rebuilt, met at a given place by appointment, and, as a body, attended C. E. meetings of neighboring churches. This may be done to advantage sometimes even where there is no condition making the regular meeting-place unavailable.

27. An Outdoor Meeting.—Sometimes in summer the warm weather keeps many of the young people away. Announce an outdoor meeting on somebody's lawn or at the most delightful available place. A basket lunch may be informally enjoyed before holding the regular prayer-meeting according to such program as has been prepared for the occasion.

28. A "Bible Promise" Meeting.—Announce this meeting in advance and urge the Endeavorers each to come prepared to repeat one of the fine promises to be found in the Scriptures. Attention may be called to the excellent points in the promise. It will add interest to be able to say: "I have talked with Grandma So and So, or Mr. Somebody or Other, and have learned that the following

promise has been a steady beacon-light through the years."

29. A Leaderless Meeting.—Write out the whole program on the blackboard. Place, in order, the names of those whom you expect to have a part in the meeting. After an announcement as to the general plan, the program should proceed voluntarily as outlined on the board.

30. A Progressive Meeting.—Divide the evening's program into three parts. Hold the opening, or devotional, period at the home of one of the society's members; the second, or voluntary talk, period at another home, and the closing period at the church. Work out a schedule and adhere strictly to it, allowing sufficient time for traveling between the various points and reaching the church in time to join in the evening worship.

31. A Twin Meeting.—Start the meeting with two stanzas from two songs. Have two persons read the Scripture lesson responsively. Have two prayers. Arrange the chairs by twos. Have two persons greet the folks at the door. Do everything in twos, even though you have to do the same thing twice. This idea can be advertised to excellent advantage.

32. A Co-op Meeting.—Let all have a hand in this meeting. Start by having each one shake hands with the one on either side of him, singing at the same time, "Blest Be the Tie that Binds Our Hearts in Christian Love." Then the leader should have the Scripture lesson read in concert. After this, he will pass his own Bible to the person near-

est him, who will understand that this is a sign that he is expected to take some part in the meeting. After this one has taken part, he will pass the Book to another, and so on around the room, until all have had a share in making the meeting enjoyable and helpful. Some may call for songs. Some one else may repeat the Lord's Prayer, asking the rest to join in the petition. Close by singing "Into My Heart."

33. A Missionary Feast. — Hold this meeting where dinners are usually served in your church. Have the tables arranged in an attractive manner. Use paper plates—one for each person present. The leader will have the picture of a mission or missionary pasted on the bottom of each plate, together with a few words of explanation. After thanks have been offered for the great work of our missionaries, the leader will begin the meeting by telling about the picture on his plate, the person to his immediate right will continue, and so on around the table. Decorate the room attractively. The novelty of the meeting will prove a great attraction.

34. A Street Meeting.—Do you get rather tired of hearing the roll called in the same old way at every consecration meeting? Isn't it rather awkward to hear the secretary read eight or nine names without responses? Try this idea: Have the secretary, during the opening service, make a list of all those in the room by streets, using the streets in the community where these people live. First, call the names of all those on A Street; let them

respond. Then call the names of those on B Street, etc. This will make extra work for the secretary, but the results will be gratifying.

35. A Favorite Text Meeting.—The leader, in preparing for this meeting, may lend an interesting touch by asking a half-dozen persons to repeat their favorite Scripture texts and tell in a short testimony what these passages have meant in their lives. After these have taken part, give the next five minutes to others, asking them merely to repeat their favorite text. The remainder of the program may be utilized in various ways—a period of "Favorite Texts of Famous People," etc.

36. A Front-seat Meeting.—Or this might be called a Reconsecration Meeting. With "Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for Strength" as the central theme, have a number of talks, urging every member to loyalty. At the close of the service let your minister give an invitation to all those who want to reconsecrate themselves to their C. E. pledge to come forward and occupy the front seats. Those who wish to accept Christ as their personal Saviour should be included in this invitation. Those who have taken the front seats should then kneel in prayer.

37. An Informal Meeting.—Have the chairs distributed over the room in an informal manner. If the room is seated with pews, change them from the usual arrangement. Let the leader's table be in the middle of the room. Everything that is said should be in conversational manner, each person taking such part as he pleases at any time.

38. A Clock Meeting.—An ideal topic for a meeting like this would be, "Our Time for Christ." Arrange a big pasteboard clock-face prominently in the front of the room. Give out, previous to the meeting, twelve topics for talks, such as "The Quiet Hour," "The Meal Hour," "The Twilight Hour," "Business Hours," "Hours for Play," "Hours for Rest," "Hours for Culture," etc. These topics should be numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. When the leader moves the hand of the clock to 1, it will be a signal for No. 1 to respond, and so on until all have taken part. When the program is completed an excellent conception of a consecrated day for consecrated Christians will be given each person present.

39. A Model Meeting.—This is a great chance to show up the defects of the regular meetings. Get a dozen young folks to take their places on the platform, which should be arranged to represent the society room. These twelve will become the meeting. Nobody will be expected to take part from the floor. The first half-hour will be devoted to "The Poor Prayer-meeting," in which the usual absence of plan and preparedness is demonstrated. The "audience" will come in late, one or two at a time; the pianist will be late, etc. The last half of the meeting may be devoted to "The Model Prayer-meeting," in which everything moves off to perfection. This demonstration should be in charge of the prayer-meeting committee, or some live-wire Endeavorer who will see that everything is staged properly.

40. A Check Meeting.—The leader will prepare a number of checks or pasteboard slips, giving the name of each person present and assigning each a number. As the young people arrive, their checks will be given them. When the meeting begins, folks will take part automatically by number.

41. A Summarized Meeting.—Before the meeting begins, appoint some wide-awake member as summarist. Let him be supplied with note-book and pencil, that he may make note of the most striking things said during the evening's discussion. At the close of the meeting the leader will call on the summarist to summarize the meeting in a five-minute talk. It might not be a bad idea to make the appointment a permanent one, if the plan is successful, and make all your meetings summarized meetings.

42. An Adventure Meeting.—Let the prayer-meeting committee announce, a week or two in advance, the purpose of this meeting. Each member of the society will be asked to do a kind deed, the like of which they have never done before, and tell about it in the Adventure Meeting. Suppose some one invites a poor newsboy to take dinner with him, or visits a shut-in, or helps a poor woman with her housework, or tells the preacher you liked his last sermon—anything to bring cheer. You will get "the thrill that comes once in a lifetime" and have one of the best meetings in the history of your society.

43. A Practical Eugenics Meeting.—This meeting must be arranged in two sections meeting si-

multaneously, but in different places. There will be a girls' and young women's meeting, and a meeting for boys and young men. If you have a local physician who is a consecrated Christian and knows his business, ask him to talk to the young men and boys on "Man's Purity and Strength." A woman doctor should be procured to speak before the girls and young women on "Woman's Purity and Strength." If it is impossible to get the right type of physicians, perhaps the minister and his wife would assume responsibility for the necessary instruction.

44. A Biography Meeting.—Let each of five or six young people be asked to make a five-minute talk about the career of some great man or woman who has been an inspiration. For example, Clara Barton, John G. Paton, Fannie Crosby, David Livingstone, Abraham Lincoln, Alexander Campbell, Frances Havergal.

45. A "Thuse" Meeting.—Pattern this somewhat after a college athletic "thuse" meeting. Let the songs be lively, and, if possible, work up an original society song to some familiar tune. Some young people should make short talks on how to improve the society and inject new life into indifferent members. Each talk should be followed by a lively song, either sung, hummed or whistled. Work up some "pep" without destroying the spirituality of the meeting.

46. A Friendship Meeting.—Make arrangements with a near-by church to "trade" leaders for this evening. Your leader should take charge of the

meeting in the neighboring church, and their regularly appointed leader will come to your meeting. At the close of the program ask the leader to tell the society what he thinks of them *a la* Bobby Burns.

47. A Letter Meeting.—When the topic for discussion deals with some live public issue, try this idea. Ask a number of prominent people in your community to write in a few words their views of the matter. Requests for such letters should be made of preachers, teachers, physicians, artists, etc. Before the meeting closes the leader may read these letters. If you announce your plan a week or so in advance, you will arouse interest among the people of your church.

48. A Life-work Meeting.—Ask a physician, a preacher, a lawyer and an educator to give five-minute talks on "Why I Consider My Profession a Great Life-work."

49. A Triangle Meeting.—Let a diagram of the "living triangle"—spirit, mind, body—be placed before the society, each sector representing one element. Have three members take "Spirit" as the general subject for their talks, three others may take "Mind," and three others, "Body." All participation should be by threes. The chairs should be seated in a triangle.

50. A Confession Meeting.—Ask each member to put on his thinking-cap before this meeting, and call to mind something he might have done and regrets that he did not do at some decisive moment in his life. Have some one stationed at the blackboard to make note of the things that were

not done. At the close let the blackboard be brought before the society with its mute testimony concerning what *might have been.* Close with a season of prayer, asking God to bless everybody present and help all to make wise choices in the future.

51. A Daily News Meeting.—Limit all participation to clippings from the daily newspapers which, in the way of news items or illustration, have a direct bearing on the topic of the evening.

52. A "Seven Wonders" Meeting.—Announce one week in advance that at this meeting you will vote to determine the seven wonders in the *moral* and *spiritual* universe. The leader of the meeting will tabulate the nominations as regular nominating speeches are made, telling why each particular wonder is worthy of selection. The actual vote will follow and the results will be announced.

53. A Civic Betterment Meeting.—There are many things your community needs. If you live in the country, it may be good roads or a social program. If you are in a village, it may be a "clean-up day" or a charity organization. If you are in a large city, it may be Lord's Day observance or night classes for foreigners. Try to inaugurate a program of community betterment at this meeting after having asked the editor of your community paper, or some one else interested in community welfare, to suggest ways to help.

54. A Fact-a-minute Meeting. — Divide your audience into five groups, giving a subject to each

group. As soon as the meeting is opened, each group will be given opportunity, in rapid succession, to state a one-minute fact about the topic assigned. Thirty minutes should be productive of thirty facts.

55. A College Meeting.—If you are in a college community, let each row of chairs in the prayer-meeting room represent a well-known college or university. A pennant representing each school should hang from a standard at the end of each row. Before the representative of each row speaks, stand and sing one stanza of the school's *alma mater* song. This will add something to the school spirit of the meeting. Urge higher education!

56. An All-America Meeting.—This plan may best be used in connection with a citizenship theme. Arouse patriotism by using the songs of America. Demonstrate the tremendous resources of the land. Or take the subject "Population," for instance. Cut a long strip of paper long enough to reach several times around the room. Tell how each inch of the strip represents one thousand Americans, and name our different nationalities. This would emphasize the need of Home Missions. Similar demonstrations may be arranged, with a little ingenuity, for almost any subject.

57. A Men-Women Meeting.—Let the men sit on one side of the room and the women on the other. Let the participation for the first half of the meeting be by men alone, and the other half by women only. This will encourage a friendly rivalry and promote a splendid meeting.

58. A Favorite Hymn Meeting.—So many excellent hymns have been written from hearts that were overflowing with love and devotion for Christ and the church that there is no limit to the material available for an evening of song and story. Get a copy of Amos R. Wells' "A Treasury of Hymns" and read the stories of our famous hymns. Select the ones you wish to use in the meeting. Have some one tell the history of a song, then sing or read the stanzas. A finer appreciation of our hymnody will result.

59. A Tug-o'-war Meeting.—Divide the audience into two sections. Have a man at the blackboard to keep the record. Taking part in the meeting will count as a "strong pull." The side getting the largest number of "strong pulls" will win the tug-o'-war. Interest will run high in a meeting of this character. A closing devotional service of at least ten minutes' duration will assure the proper spirit.

60. A Post-election Meeting can be made an annual event of real significance in the life of the society. It should be held after the election in November, when it is known who the new President will be, or what national or State issues have been decided. Without political rancor, review in short, crisp, five-minute speeches the results. Consider the results from a Christian viewpoint. Focus the discussion upon the responsibility of the Christian as a citizen.

61. An Opinion Meeting.—Select some live social or moral issue in your community. Prepare a questionnaire and present it to schools, lodges,

clubs and other community organizations. Compile the data secured, and at a stated meeting report various interesting phases of them to the society. Local newspapers will be glad to print extended reports on the results of your investigations.

62. An Anti-devil Meeting. — Advertise this meeting with posters showing the church chasing the devil. This will attract everybody's attention. Divide the evening into six periods, in which six different topics will be discussed. For example: "Defying the Devil" (1) "In Amusement," (2) "In the Home," (3) "In the School," (4) "In Business," (5) "In the Church," (6) "Every Day."

63. A Reformers' Meeting.—There are a great many reform organizations in the United States with which every Christian Endeavorer should be familiar, such as the Anti-Saloon League, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the Purity Congress, the Civic Reform Federation, etc. Write these various organizations for pamphlets concerning their work. Give over a part of the meeting to a brief explanation of the aims and purposes of these societies and distribute their free literature.

64. A Post-office Meeting.—The leader should write a dozen persons who were formerly active members of the society and who have moved out of the community, asking each of them to send a short letter of counsel and encouragement to be read in the meeting. Prepare sealed envelopes for each member of the society present, containing a verse of Scripture to be read, or a topic for a talk. When the time for this feature comes, the leader

will announce: "There is a letter in our post-office for Miss A——." Miss A—— will come forward, receive her envelope and take part in the meeting as she is directed. The others will respond in like manner.

65. A Beginning-again Meeting.—When the society needs a revival, plan a Beginning-again Meeting. Start the song service with "Revive Us Again," and use similar songs throughout the evening. Call the roll and ask each member to respond with a suggestion for society betterment. Each committee chairman and officer might make a public resolution to do better work in the future. Close with the reading of Tarkington's "Land of Beginning Again."

66. A Draft Meeting.—Send out cards to every young man and woman in the church and Sunday school, notifying all of them that they have been "drafted" to appear in the Christian Endeavor meeting. Make the cards as official-looking as possible. Members of the society should receive special cards bearing a number by which they will be called upon to take part in the meeting. When the time comes these numbers will be put in a hat, and some one, while blindfolded, will choose the participants by drawing the numbers from the hat. All those who could not be present should be represented by a filed "claims for exemption." These claims will be read when their numbers are drawn from the hat.

67. A Five-point Meeting.—Cut a large, five-pointed star out of heavy cardboard and place it

against an upright standard with a small nail through the center, in full view of the audience. Label the five points of the star "Home Life," "Business Life," "School Life," "Church Life," "Social Life." Place the word "Co-operation" in the center of the star. Divide the time for discussion into five periods, devoting one period to each point of the star. The point of the star pointing toward the leader will indicate which topic is under consideration. The leader will turn the star. This same plan may be utilized for almost any topic.

68. A Clothes-line Meeting.—Some time beforehand ask each member of the society to prepare a twenty-word testimony or quoted sentiment in writing. These will be brought to the meeting. On entering the door, every one should be furnished with a clothes-pin. A short clothes-line should be stretched somewhere in the front of the room. After each person has given his testimony, he will come forward and pin the written manuscript on the line. There will be quite a wash "out" if the meeting is properly promoted.

69. A Bluebird Meeting.—The leader should familiarize himself with Maeterlinck's "Bluebird" before planning the meeting. The theme will be, of course, the quest for happiness. The room should be decorated with strings of bluebirds which can be very easily cut and colored for the occasion. Cards bearing topics for talks, or invitations to attend the meeting, should have tiny bluebirds pasted or painted in the corner. Begin advertising the meeting a number of weeks in ad-

vance by simply filling the Endeavor-room with bluebirds and the date of the event.

70. A Fellowship Meeting.—A supper and social hour should be held from six to seven. Following this practical demonstration of fellowship, try a "sing" with the entire company grouped informally around the piano. Then will come the regular prayer-meeting program. The idea of fellowship should be stressed in five short introductory talks: "Christian Fellowship," "Fellowship in Our Church," "Fellowship in Our Society," "Fellowship in Suffering," "Fellowship in Evangelism." All this under the general subject "Christian Fellowship" (1 John 1:1-7).

71. A "Whole Family" Meeting.—Why not have at least one night each year when the fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers of the Endeavorers are invited to enjoy a prayer-meeting with you? The reception committee should make rather elaborate preparations to make everybody feel at home. Some such subject as "Our Homes for Christ" could be discussed, using Cornelius' household conversion as the lesson.

72. A Twenty-in-sixty Meeting.—The meeting at which this snappy program (twenty speakers in sixty minutes) was presented was held in a Chicago church. The list of subjects is interesting, and is as follows:

Keeping the Pledge.
Individual Bible Study.
The Private Prayer Life.
The Work of the President.

The Wide-awake Secretary.
The Worth-while Business Meeting.
Leading the C. E. Meeting.
How to Pray in the Meeting.
Taking Part in the Meeting.
Variety in the Consecration Service.
Christian Endeavor Music.
The Work for Missions.
Temperance Meetings.
Christian Endeavor Socials.
The Lookout Committee Doing Things.
The Importance of Junior Work.
Christian Endeavor in the High-school Age.
Christian Citizenship.
Christian Endeavor Around the World.
Christian Endeavor as a Training-school for the Church.

73. A Betsy Ross Meeting.—Construct a good-sized flag with a plain blue field in the upper left-hand corner, leaving the remainder of the flag white. Place this on the blackboard or the wall in front of the room. Obtain adhesive red stripes and white stars. Let a prayer count as a stripe and a talk as a star. As rapidly as people participate, the flag will be constructed before the eyes of the audience. See if the whole flag can not be completed.

74. A Sunday Problem Meeting.—The question of Lord's Day observance always introduces practical problems. Why not try to settle these questions at a special prayer-meeting. Here is a list to start with:

Should one write letters on Sunday?
Should one take walks on Sunday?
Should one indulge in games on Sunday?

Should one read the Sunday newspaper?
Should one make calls on Sunday?
Should one go "joy-riding" on Sunday?
Should one read novels on Sunday?
Should one study on Sunday?
Should public museums and libraries be open on Sunday?
Should any but sacred music be played on Sunday?

Divide these ten problems among ten people, asking each to come prepared to answer his question in two minutes. Emphasize the time restrictions. Then open the meeting to a general discussion of the questions raised.

75. A Ledger-account Meeting.—Just before a financial campaign in a certain society, the following graphic plan was used for the prayer-meeting hour. In front of the room was placed a large blackboard on which previously had been drawn an open ledger-account book. At the top of the board were these words: "Our Account with God." At the top of the left page was written the word "Debit," at the top of the right page the word "Credit." After a short talk on the subject "Stewards of Christ Jesus," the leader wrote the word "Missions" on the credit side of the ledger, at the same time asking some one in the audience to tell why money spent for missions is well pleasing to the Master. After the talk the leader wrote after the word "Missions" the amount of money given by Americans for missions during the past year. The first word on the debit side was "Tobacco," then followed "Chewing-gum," "Dress," "Automobiles," "Benevolence," "Reform," etc. At the close the leader summed up the account and made a

stirring, appeal for more liberal giving for the spread of the teachings of Jesus Christ, which teachings are the foundation of all that is really great in our civilization.

76. A Diagnosis Meeting.—Try putting a dramatic touch in the opening minutes of this appropriate after-the-summer-slump meeting. Bring in a presumably sick man on a stretcher, with a big placard bearing the words "Our Prayer-meeting Is Sick." Those bearing the stretcher and those accompanying them should wear large placards bearing the words "Miss Gossip," "Old Man Grump," "Elder Solemn," "Peter Pessimist," "Minnie Ha Ha" and "Lazy Bones." After putting the stretcher down on the platform, Miss Gossip will feel the sick man's pulse and tell how "all the church is talking because the prayer-meeting is dead." Old Man Grump will kick about things in general. Elder Solemn will say that the spiritual temperature of the patient is below normal. Peter Pessimist will tell why there are no hopes. Minnie Ha Ha will joke about the proposition. Lazy Bones will say: "Let's wait and see if it doesn't get better." Finally "Dr. Fix-it" comes in, diagnoses the case in a systematic way and prescribes a remedy. Such a novel idea, worked out in a proper way, will make one of the best meetings your society ever had.

77. A Stand-up Meeting.—This is a little different plan. When the time comes for the program features of the meeting, ask the whole audience to stand. Make a ruling that no one may sit

down until he has taken part by prayer, testimony, calling for a hymn, or some other way. Of course in a large society this would be impractical.

78. A Clean-up Meeting.—Hang before the society a large outline map of the United States, on which are pinned a number of black splotches labeled Divorce, Juvenile Crime, Murder, Robbery, Liquor, Graft, Ignorance, Injustice, Infidelity. Then have various members tell how the teaching of Christ can remove each blot. After the talk, take down that particular splotch under discussion and proceed in this manner until the map is clean.

79. A Square Meeting.—Ask folks to form a hollow square as large as their number will allow; for example, eight on each side. As the meeting progresses and others arrive, invite them within the square. As soon as the beginning period is over, suggest some thoughts about a square. It gives the idea of completeness, as all sides must be equal; it gives the idea of co-operation, because the opposite sides are parallel and of equal length; it suggests the idea of rightness, since we often speak of "a square deal." All of these things are essential to good Christian work. For the Scripture lesson four parts should be assigned, one to each side of the square. In a meeting of this kind other things may be done if time permits. A prayer may be called for from each of the four sides, or each side may sing one stanza of the hymns, all joining in the chorus.

80. A Souvenir Meeting.—To encourage young people in taking part in the prayer-meeting with-

out reading, the prayer-meeting committee chairman in a New York society announced that to each one who took part without the use of a paper or book of any kind would be given a small American flag. As each one earned his flag, it was given him by one of the younger members. This has been repeated at irregular intervals, each souvenir being appropriate to the month.

81. A Testimony Meeting.—Obviously the leading characteristic of a prayer-meeting should be the testimony. The leader and the chairman of the prayer-meeting committee should go to those who have been backward in the matter of testimony and urge them to use their tongues for Christ in this meeting better than ever before. The way to get this done is not to preach to these Endeavorers, but to give them all definite tasks in the meeting, tasks that will mean progress for each of them.

82. A Bible Meeting.—Begin some weeks in advance to advertise for the meeting. Get people to lend for display the oldest copies of the Bible they have, and other copies that may be of special historic or romantic interest. Have some one give a brief statement about each Bible in the exhibit, and emphasize the value of the Bible as shown by the number and the age of the books which people have brought. The reading of what leading men of the world have said in praise of the Bible would be a good feature.

83. A Motto Fair.—Advertise a Motto Fair, to which the members of the society and visitors may

bring various mottoes for display. All these must be printed or drawn on cardboard by the exhibitor. Offer a prize for the best job of printing, and another for the best motto. Display these on the wall and use them during the meeting by having the audience read some of the best ones in unison, and assigning others as topics for talks.

84. A Multi-leader Meeting.—Have the meeting led by all the leaders for a given period, the president and the chairman of the prayer-meeting committee. These may divide the responsibilities among them, each taking charge of a definite portion of the meeting. All of them should sit on the platform.

85. A Budget Meeting. — First budget the prayer-meeting hour and allow a certain number of minutes for each part of the program. Make this out on the blackboard or on a large sheet of cardboard and hang it before the society. Ask a number of members to submit budgets showing what they think is the right way to spend one's time. This will afford a basis for some interesting discussion. A model financial budget for the society might well be considered.

86. A Football Meeting.—Advertise the meeting with posters illustrated by football pictures, with appropriate wording. Divide the society into two sides, with a captain for each. Arrange the two football teams facing each other. Allow yardage for participation and a touchdown for each prayer.

87. A Newspaper Meeting.—If possible to get a Christian newspaper man to speak at this meet-

ing, do so. Let him make a short talk on "The Newspaper for Righteousness." Ask each member to tell the most helpful thing he or she has read in the newspapers during the last month. Find out what is the most popular periodical read by members of the society. Announce parts of the meeting in journalistic terms, such as Music Section, songs; Editorial, the leader's talk; Literary Gems, from the Scriptures; Exchanges, clippings; News Items, original talks; Personals, prayers; Advertisements, announcements, etc.

88. A Flag Meeting.—Decorate the meeting-place appropriately with flags or bunting. The leader may take a small flag on a staff and hold this while making his talk. The flag should then be passed to the first one to take any part in the general program. This one will pass the flag on to another. Any one who receives the flag and fails to contribute a talk, a prayer, a Scripture quotation or other feature will lower the flag before passing it on. This is a very appropriate meeting to be held near a holiday of patriotic import, such as the Fourth of July.

89. A Bible-verse Meeting.—Let the songs that are sung be based on Bible verses. Have the prayers that are offered include verses from the Bible. Let every one who takes part have a verse of Scripture pertaining to the subject, and then have each member give a one-minute talk with his Bible verse as a text. Let those who answer questions include Bible verses in their answers. This would influence a large number of Endeavorers to

spend time in preparation for the Christian Endeavor prayer-meeting who otherwise do not.

90. A "Lighting the World" Meeting.—Place on the floor of the platform a large map of the world, slightly elevated on the far side so that it may be seen from the audience. Explain that the work of the church is to spread the light of the gospel to the four corners of the world. Ask various members to speak on the work of Christian missions in the various foreign and home fields. As each one speaks, light a candle and place it on the country considered.

91. A "Song and Prayer" Meeting.—Instead of opening the meeting with the usual song service, try a song-and-prayer service. There are many good prayer songs. Begin with "Nearer, My God, to Thee." By way of preparation, ask as many Endeavorers to offer short prayers as there are stanzas in the hymn, and tell each one which stanza belongs to him. With heads bowed all will sing the first stanza, and the one who has been given this stanza then prays without further announcement. Then sing the second stanza and have the second prayer, and so on. This will add reverence as well as variety to the meeting.

92. An Emergency Meeting.—Once in awhile, even in the best-regulated societies, a prayer-meeting leader is unexpectedly absent, and for good reason. The chairman of the prayer-meeting committee should be ready for this emergency, and he may well have in mind a little emergency program. This will consist of various plans adapted to any

topic he may wish to try. For instance, the plan of holding the leader's talk till the very close of the meeting is most suitable for an emergency program. For another instance, the plan of giving Bibles to two members of the society and asking them to stand in front of the audience and read the opening Scripture in alternate verses. Then, he may form an impromptu duet or quartet. Chain prayers, silent prayers, Scripture Memory Verses, etc., are always appropriate. Make this the motto: "Something doing every minute, and that something according to God's will."

93. A Bible-drill Meeting.—Take a goodly portion of the regular program for an old-fashioned Bible drill in reciting the books of the Bible, finding Scripture passages and answering Bible questions.

94. A Volunteer Meeting. — In this meeting everything is to be done by volunteers. Place on the blackboard a suggested program for the evening. Announce at the beginning that you expect members of the society to volunteer to take each part. After the volunteers have selected each number on the program, proceed with the program. It will be well to have a few prepared in advance to lead off and volunteer for the more difficult parts.

95. A Million-dollar Meeting.—Assume that one of your society members has just inherited a million dollars. Have the members advise him how to make the best use of it, and give the reason for their advice. Limit the speeches to three minutes.

96. A Singspiration Meeting.—Have some one capable of leading in song give much thought to the preparation of an entire program of song. Sing songs in different ways—responsively, sectionally, etc. Sing them, whistle them, hum them, pray them—while the piano plays the melody softly. Have a period in which the various members may request their favorite song or hymn.

97. A Children's Meeting.—Be big brother and big sister to the kiddies of the church and community. Start the meeting about the middle of the afternoon with a social period. After a light luncheon put on a program at the prayer-meeting hour which will feature the children. Have a junior choir. Ask some children to give declamations. If you have a Junior C. E. society, you can co-operate with the Junior superintendent in preparations for the event.

98. A Janus Meeting will offer diversion at the beginning of the new year. Reverse enough of the seats in the society room for half of those present to face the rear of the room. Place the leader at the end of the aisle between the reversed section and the section seated as usual. Use the topic "Retrospect and Prospect." The ones who have turned around are looking backward and will talk about the old year, the others will talk about the new.

99. A Telegram Meeting.—Get some blank telegrams and write a short invitation, telegram style, to every young man and woman of the church and community. If possible, have these delivered by

uniformed messengers. Place the program for the meeting on a huge telegram blank in the front of the society room. Devote a period at the close in which ten-word telegrams may be written to absent members who have missed three consecutive meetings.

100. A Phonograph or Radio Meeting may be very popular. The officers of the International Society of Christian Endeavor have made numbers of records which could be played. The voice of the sainted founder of the movement, Dr. Francis E. Clark, has been recorded, and the record can be made available for your meeting. Leading ministers and Endeavor leaders often speak over the radio and appear in television. Utilize such occasions to increase attendance at your prayer-meetings.

101. A Debate Meeting.—This is old, but ever new. There are 101 subjects, standard and current, upon which it is very easy to develop discussion. Introduce the meeting in the usual debate form and then let general discussion follow. A poll of society opinion at the close, in true Oxford style, adds an interesting touch. Some such topic as this is good: "Resolved that the world to-day needs men like John the Baptist more than it needs men like John the apostle."

An Admonition.—It is hardly necessary to give a word of caution against absolute dependence upon mechanics. Folks are inclined to follow the lines of least resistance. The haphazard prayer-meeting with a dead or dying atmosphere is a thou-

sand times worse than all the dangers of machine methods put together.

It takes hard work to make proper use of methods, and most people would rather criticize them than exert themselves enough to use them. However, there is such a thing as coming to believe that these mechanical devices are superior to the real spiritual necessities.

A prayer-meeting may become a place for mere entertainment by a too frequent and undiplomatic use of the expedients suggested in this chapter. After all, the prayer-meeting program must be designed with the larger end in view of meeting the soul-hunger for spiritual, life-giving food and the proper nurture of young life for a worthy record of Christian service.

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